



REPORT

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO TO THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

DATE ISSUED: October 26, 2017

REPORT No. 201

ATTENTION: Park and Recreation Board
Agenda of October 19, 2017

SUBJECT: Fiesta Island Amendment to the Mission Bay Park Master Plan

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATIONAL ITEM ONLY: NO ACTION IS REQUIRED.

BACKGROUND

The Fiesta Island Amendment (Project) to the Mission Bay Park Master Plan (Master Plan) amends the existing adopted Master Plan as it describes the land uses, water uses, environment, and access and circulation on Fiesta Island. One key point of this amendment is that **TWO OPTIONS** are presented. The two options reflect similar land use throughout the island, but differ in their proposals for development of the southwest sub-area. Southwest sub-area Option A provides a fenced in off-leash dog park, a park road extension, parking facilities, a non-motorized boat storage area, and a developed park adjacent to a swimming beach. Southwest sub-area Option B provides a larger fenced in off-leash dog park, parking at the north and east perimeter of this area, and trails.

The project is based on the planning efforts carried out by City Planning staff and presented to the Mission Bay Park Committee in 2010, where the Committee recommended approval of a preferred plan identified as Concept Plan 5f (see **Attachment 1 – Fiesta Island Concept Plan 5f**). This plan outlines a number of significant improvements on the island based on public input. Some of these improvements included the reconfiguration of the roadway, a new causeway, a fenced off-leash dog area, primitive camping, traditional park areas with picnic facilities, trails and bicycle facilities, and additional habitat areas. These improvements provide for a substantially smaller impact on the island than those improvements proposed in the adopted Master Plan. The Fiesta Island Amendment to the Master Plan will be accompanied by a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) when brought forward for approval.

Project Area

The project area (approximately 485 acres) includes all the land encompassed by Fiesta Island as well as the Tecolote Creek wetlands, Fiesta Island causeway, and a small parking lot north of the causeway on the mainland near the intersection of East Mission Bay Drive and Fiesta Island Road. The project area is shown in **Attachment 2 – Project Area**.

Mission Bay Park Master Plan Goals and Recommendations for Fiesta Island:

The vision for Fiesta Island, as outlined in the Mission Bay Park Master Plan, is a place where City residents and visitors alike will find the ultimate refuge from urban congestion, noise, and visual clutter (page 128). To meeting that goal, the Island's land use has been graded in intensity from highly developed parkland to the south to more natural and open areas to the north. The overarching goal for Fiesta Island, as described by the Master Plan, is that the Island will be *"an area which supports a diversity of regional-serving public and non-profit recreation and natural resource management and enhancement uses"* (Mission Bay Park Master Plan Update, Appendix A, page 13-14). The Plan outlines a number of specific objectives designed to guide development to meet this goal. Those objectives are that Fiesta Island will be:

- 1.1 *An Island whose east side provides for citywide and regional-serving passive recreation uses, forming a unit with the North Pacific Passage and the East Shores area of the Park.*
- 1.2 *An Island whose west side focuses on the wide beach and its relationship to the water uses on Fiesta Bay, allowing for informal public use of the beach and permitting temporary use as a controlled access special event view area.*
- 1.3 *An Island where the landscape design of the east and west sides respect their significance in terms of defining the Park's image to passing and through traffic as well as to Park users.*
- 1.4 *An Island which provides for the operation of special events both on land and on adjacent water bodies.*
- 1.5 *An Island whose southern side provides for public recreational uses complementary to the water use in South Pacific Passage and Hidden Anchorage Cove, and the land use at the South Shores area of the Park.*
- 1.6 *An Island which includes a substantial new resource enhancement area, located to the southwest facing across the water to Sea World, displacing the current sludge drying beds.*
- 1.7 *An Island which provides for bicycles and other non-motorized forms of circulation, pedestrian circulation, and connection to other park areas.*
- 1.8 *An Island on which pedestrian and other non-motorized forms of circulation, pedestrian circulation, and connection to other park area.*
- 1.9 *An Island on which special emphasis is placed on using natural landscapes within recreation areas.*
- 1.10 *An Island on which the land is graded to increase the area with strong visual connection to the water.*
- 1.11 *An Island to which the access bridge(s) and/or causeway(s) form an appropriate gateway and aesthetic statement.*

This amendment to the Master Plan is proposed to meet as many of these goals as possible while considering physical constraints, changes in public desire for regional parkland, and evolving ecological and natural resource considerations.

SCHEDULE

The following is a tentative schedule for the Fiesta Island Amendment and Program EIR:

- Spring 2017 – Project Kick-Off, PEIR Notice of Preparation, Review of Existing Master Plan, and analysis of past planning efforts
- Summer 2017 – Preparation of the Fiesta Island amendments and PEIR technical studies
- Fall / Winter 2017 – Preparation of first Draft PEIR
- Spring 2018 – Draft PEIR out for public review, Final Draft Amendment and Recommendations from Park Advisory Bodies
- Summer 2018 – Approval process by the City Council and the Coastal Commission

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Much of the initial public outreach was completed from 2005 to 2010. In this effort a number of community meetings, design charrettes, planning workshops, and surveys were conducted. For the current phase of the project, public outreach will be through park advisory body meetings as well as formal points with the environmental process. As part of the current outreach, there have been three public meetings related to the Fiesta Island Amendment to date. The first was the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the PEIR meeting held at Mission Bay High School in April 2017. The second was an information item to the Mission Bay Park Committee, held in July 2017, outlining the proposed changes to the Master Plan including land uses, water use, environment, and access and circulation. The third public meeting was an information item to the Mission Bay Park Committee presenting the draft Master Plan amendments to the Mission Bay Park Committee at their October 2017 meeting.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

A summary of the proposed plan amendments for the Mission Bay Park Master Plan include amending the sections on land uses, water uses, environment, access and circulation, and the section on South Shores/Fiesta Island. A summary of the amendments to the Land Use Section include moving the regional parkland from the south to the central area of the island. The proposed primitive camping lease area is moved from the north to the central area. Active recreation in the southwest and central area remain, but have been reduced in size. Water Use Section amendments include a provision for personal watercraft trailer parking in Option A; no provision for personal watercraft trailer parking is included in Option B. Amendments to the Environmental Section include the addition of new wetland habitat at the north end of the island and the removal of eelgrass along the western perimeter. Within the Access and Circulation Section a major change to the park road features a reversal of direction of traffic from the current “counter-clockwise” direction to a

“clockwise” direction. To facilitate this change a round-about is proposed on the island just after the causeway. This change in direction will improve safety and allow for partial closures of the island during special events – leaving much of the island open for public use (currently special events shut down the entire island for public use). A buffered bike lane follows the road throughout the island and will improve bicycle safety (see **Attachment 3 – Park Roadway Section**). Multi-purpose trails for pedestrian and bicycle users and natural trails for hiking are provided along with above grade bridges to separate these users from vehicular users.

Within the South Shores and Fiesta Island Section, the amendments configure the island into “sub-areas”. Each sub-area contains a number of uses that follow the Master Plan’s guidelines to concentrate the most intense park development and land uses in the southern areas of the island, while the northern areas are dedicated primarily to natural habitats and ecological resources. The following provide a summary of the four sub-areas:

The Northern sub-area maintains much of the Master Plan recommendations to consist primarily of the Least Tern habitat area and a constructed wetland habitat area. **See Attachment 4 – Northern sub-area.**

The Central sub-area contains the existing sand arena (for Over-the-Line and other special events) and the sand management area is moved from its current location to the north of the sand arena. Hiking, biking, and equestrian trails traverse the coastal landscape zones of the sub-area. The existing youth camping area and aquatic center leasehold remain unchanged. **See Attachment 5 – Central sub-area.**

The Southeast sub-area proposes regional parkland (including turf fields for informal play, children’s play structures, picnic areas, and other park amenities), a primitive camping area (to be operated by City staff or as a leasehold), day use camping area, comfort stations, public plazas, hiking and biking trails, parking lots, and a ranger station / concession stand. It is anticipated that this will be the most intensely used area of the island. **See Attachment 6 – Southeast sub-area.**

The Southwest sub-area is the subject of the two options for the island.

Option A proposes the area be primarily a fenced off-leash dog park with restrooms, watering stations, assorted dog play areas, a dog friendly public plaza, and adjacent parking. This option also includes a two-way park road that extends to a parking area and a new park with a children’s play area, turf, and picnic areas. The park road, parking, and the parkland would be separated from the off-leash area by fencing. Dogs would be permitted in this area on a leash. A supervised swimming area will be located adjacent to this park. A non-motorized personal watercraft (PWC) storage area is located to the west of the park. The southwest tip of the sub-area (Stony Point) remains a fenced off Least Tern habitat area. Option A is based on the plan presented to and recommended by the Mission Bay Park Committee in 2010. **See Attachment 7 – Southwest sub-area Option A.**

Option B proposes the entirety of the southwest sub-area to be a fenced off-leash dog area. Improvements include a parking lot in the northwest area and along the

east side near the terminus of Hidden Anchorage Cove. In addition, this option provides an entrance plaza, trails, seating areas, native and non-native vegetation areas, a maintenance and emergency trail, a leash-free swimming beach, and a small dog leash-free fenced area. Option B is based on the plan provided by FIDO (Fiesta Island Dog Owners), a stakeholder group representing those members of the community that use the dog park on the island. **See Attachment 8 - Southwest sub-area Option B.**

NEXT STEPS

The next steps include an action item to the Mission Bay Park Committee to recommend approval of the final draft plan amendments, public review of the PEIR, and an action item to the Park and Recreation Board in Spring 2018. Final approval by City Council and the Coastal Commission of the amendment to the Master Plan is scheduled in Summer 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Muto
Deputy Director, Planning Department

Prepared by: Clark Taylor
Park Designer, Planning Department

(CT/ct)

- Attachments:
1. Fiesta Island Concept Plan 5f
 2. Project Area
 3. Park Roadway Section
 4. Northern sub-area
 5. Central sub-area
 6. Southeast sub-area
 7. Southwest sub-area Option A
 8. Southwest sub-area Option B

cc: Herman Parker, Director, Park and Recreation Department
Jeff Murphy, Director, Planning Department
Andy Field, Assistant Director, Park and Recreation Department
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Robin Shifflet, Development Project Manager III, Planning Department
Liezl Mangonon, Deputy Chief of Staff, Council District 2

FIESTA ISLAND PRECISE PLAN

Figure 26: Proposed Land Use Alt. 5f

Legend

----- Bioswale

----- Fences


 Eel Grass

 Infiltration Basin


Land Use

 Regional Park

 Natural Recreation Area

 Sand Management Area


 Shoreline Park

 Primitive Camping Area


 Existing and Expanded Youth Camping


 Fenced Habitat Areas

 Sand Recreation Areas

 Primary Fenced Leash Free Dog Area

 Circulation

 Swimming Beach

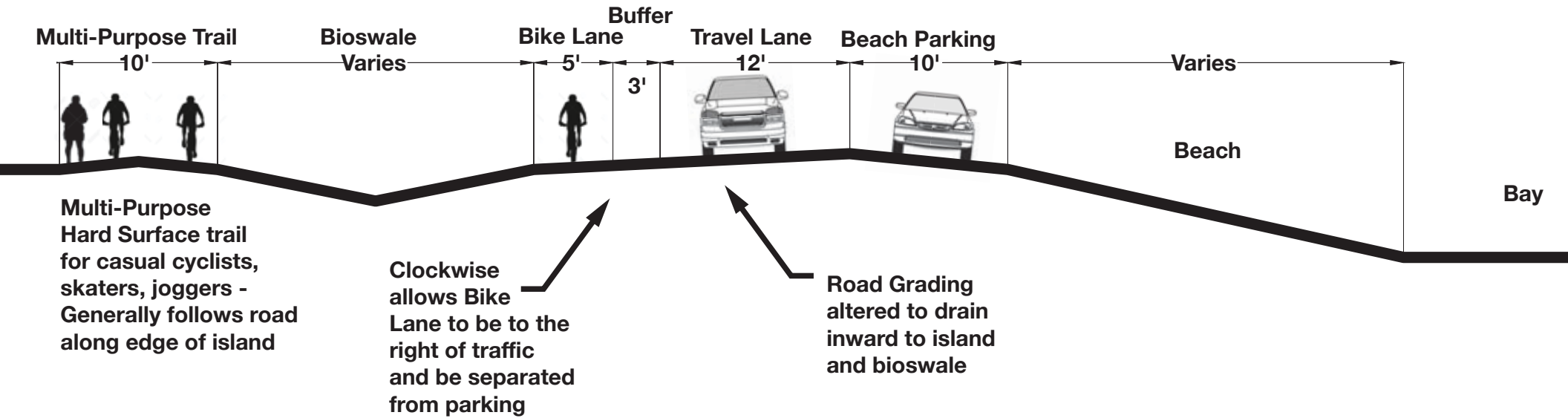
 Dredged Shoreline



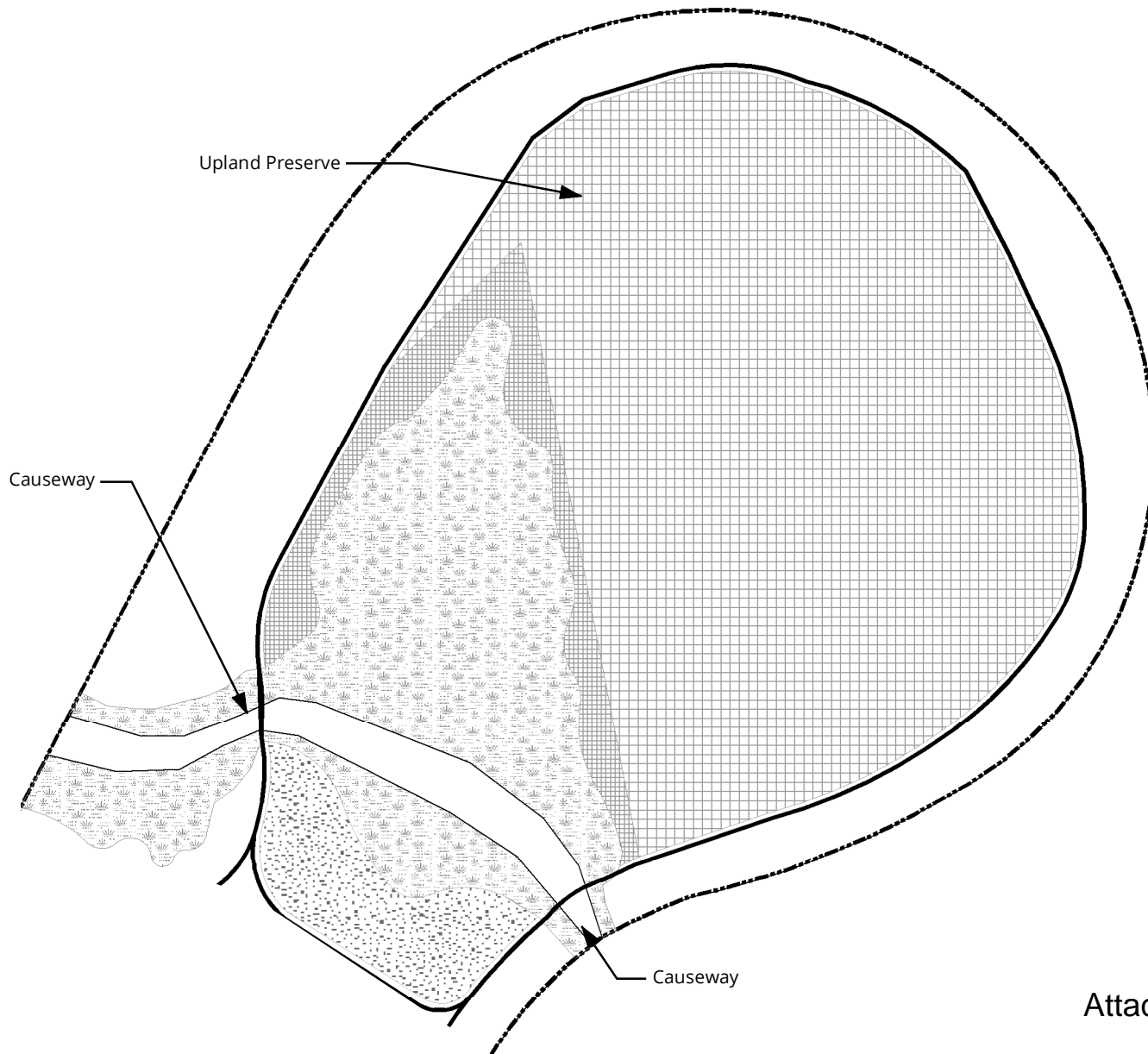
Attachment 1 - Alternative 5f (2010)



Attachment 2 - Project Area



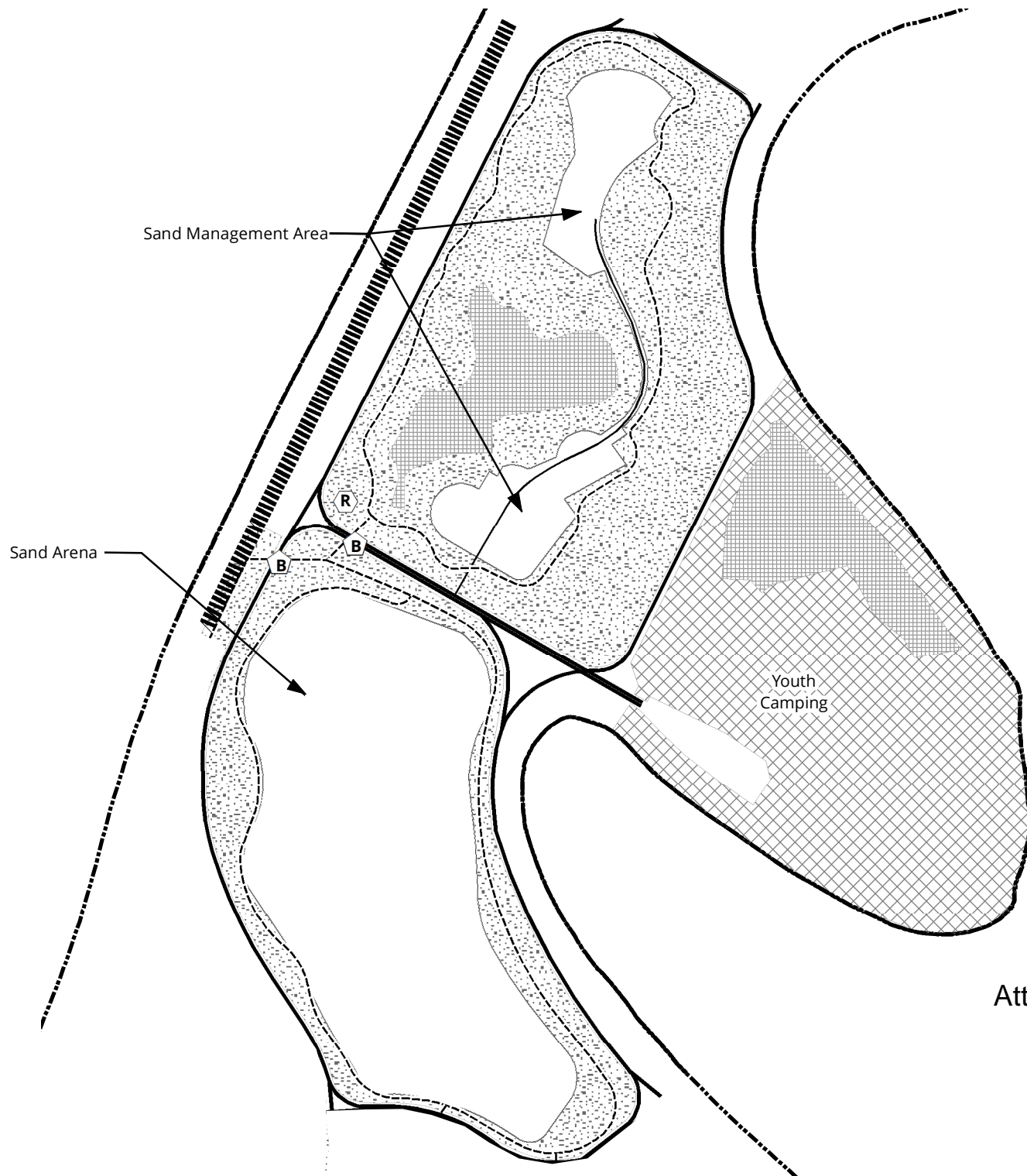
Attachment 3 - Typical Circulation Section



LEGEND

-  Coastal Landscape
-  Sensitive Habitat
-  Upland Preserve
-  Wetlands

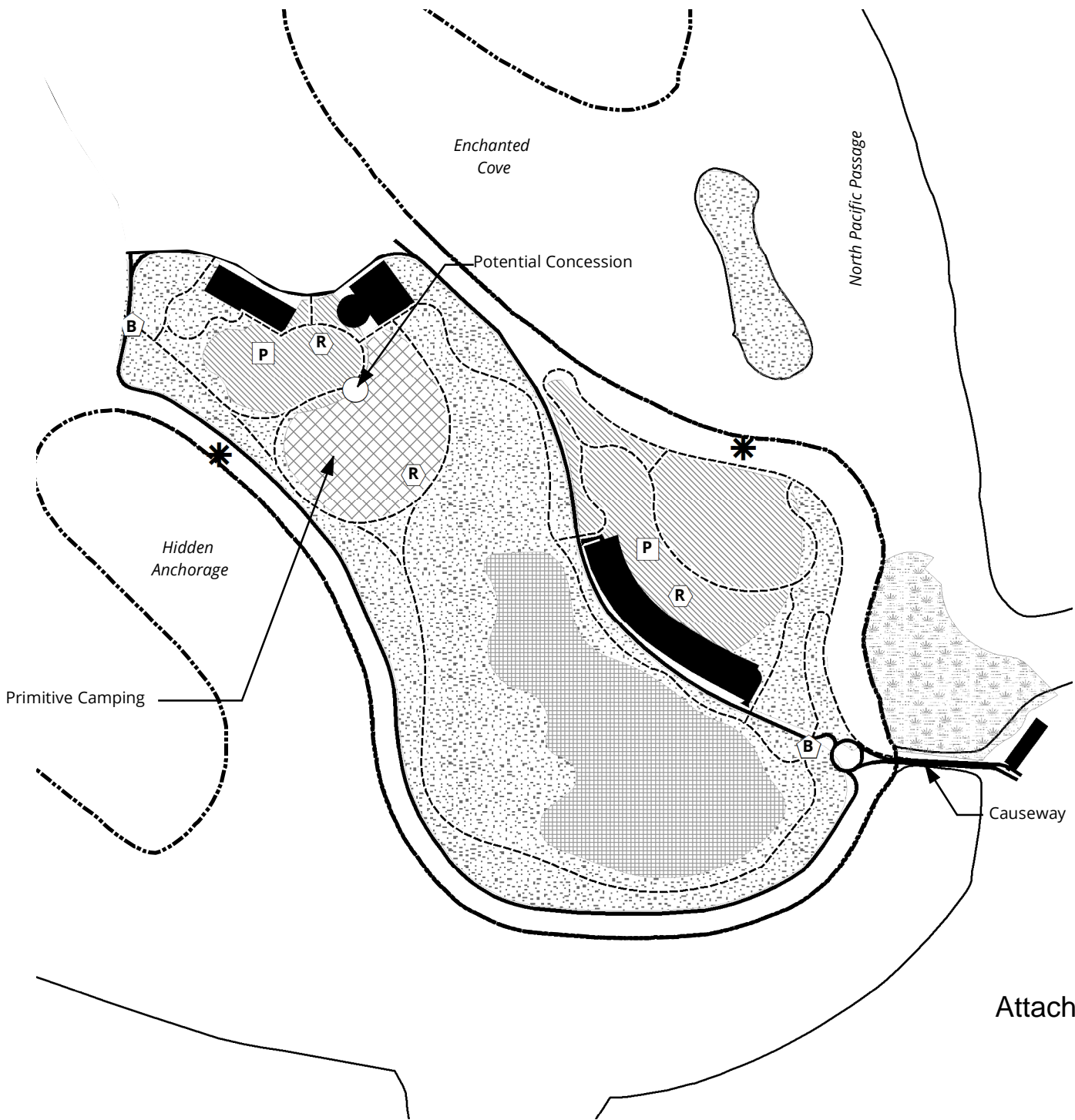
Attachment 4 - Northern Sub-Area



LEGEND

- ▨ Special Event RV Parking
- ⬠ P Pedestrian Bridge
- ⬠ B Restrooms
- ▧ Primitive Camping
- ▤ Coastal Landscape
- ▦ Sensitive Habitat
- ▩ Upland Preserve

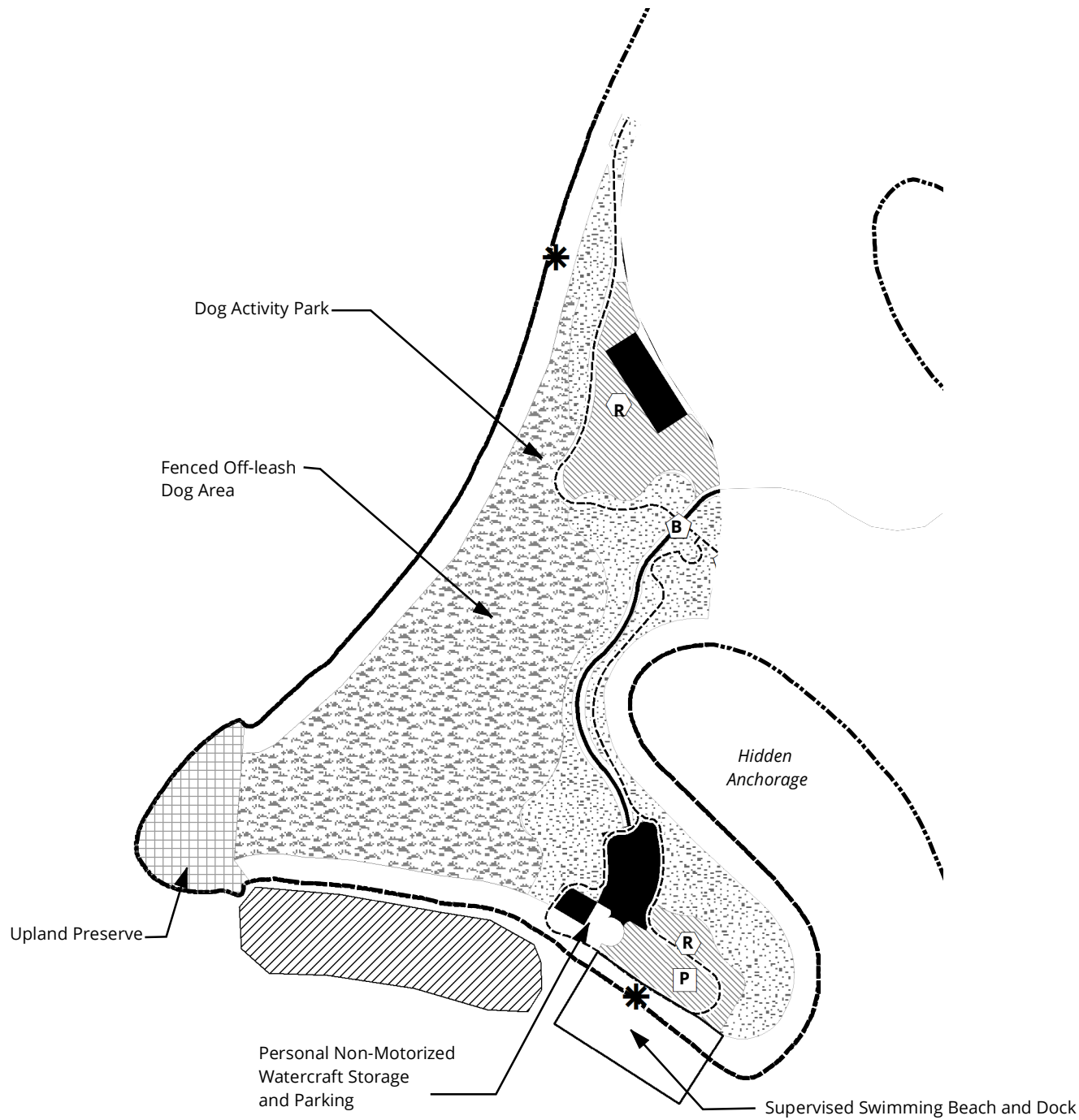
Attachment 5 - Central Sub-Area













LEGEND

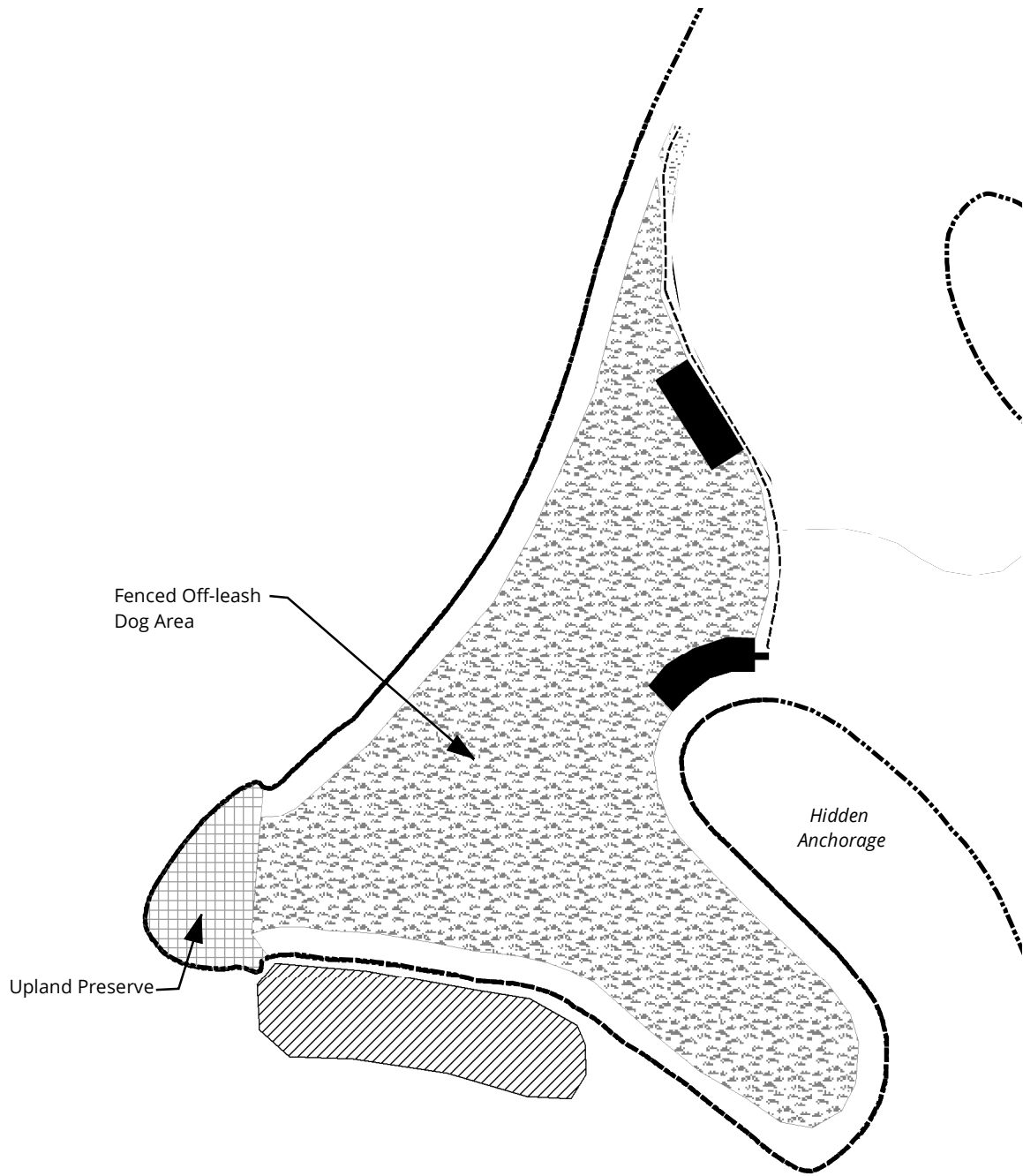
-  ADA Shore Access
-  Playground
-  Pedestrian Bridge
-  Restrooms
-  Primitive Camping
-  Coastal Landscape
-  Sensitive Habitat
-  Upland Preserve
-  Parkland
-  Wetlands
-  Parking

Attachment 6 - Southeast Sub-Area



LEGEND

-  ADA Shore Access
-  Playground
-  Pedestrian Bridge
-  Restrooms
-  Coastal Landscape
-  Sensitive Habitat
-  Upland Preserve
-  Parkland
-  Proposed Eelgrass Expansion
-  Parking








Fenced Off-leash
Dog Area

Upland Preserve

*Hidden
Anchorage*

LEGEND

-  Coastal Landscape
-  Upland Preserve
-  Proposed Eelgrass Expansion
-  Wetlands
-  Parking